(c) what steps Government propose to take to increase foodgrain production in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The statistics reported in the news-items are based on the advance estimates released by the central statistical Organisation. These in turn, were based on the assessment of crop condition made sometimes in January, 2000 Prolonged dry spell in several parts of the country adversely affected crop condition in several states. However, good rainfall since mid January, 2000 in the country has improved prospects of foodgrains. As per latest assessment if agro-climatic conditions remain favourable, there is not expected to be any inordinate decline in production of foodgrains during the year 1999-2000.

(c) Review of production is a continuous process to increase production and productivity of foodgrains in the country, the Government is implementing centrally sponsored Integrated cereal development programmes in rice/wheat/coarse cereals Based Cropping System Area, National Pulses Development Project etc. Under these programmes/project, incentives are provided to farmers for use of high yielding varieties of seeds, application of integrated pest management, propagation of scientific water management including micro irrigation and use of improved farm implements. Reserch is also being continuously undertaken to develop improved technologies so as to enhance the productivity and production of foodgrains in India. Field demonstrations on farmers' holdings including training of farmers and farm labourers is being organised for effective transfer of technology.

Deaths due to heat-wave

4119. SHRI ANANTA SETHI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of deaths due to sun stroke and heat-wave in Orissa;

(b) if so, the steps taken to deal with the problem;

(c) the number of people died due to sunstroke and heat-wave in that State; and

(d) the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) State Government have reported that they are aware of the heat conditions in the State and details due to sun-stroke

(b) The State Government is reported to have taken necessary preventive measures, like steps to repair all drinking water sources and provide water through tankers in the scarcity pockets, opening of voluntary supply points for drinking water, rescheduling the timings of examination and working hours of schools & colleges, rescheduling the working hours of labourers to avoid direct exposure, keeping in stock of essential life saving medicines, instructions to the concerned agencies to provide uninterrupted power supply to health institutions and examination centres and through adequate publicity through the media, with a view to bring awareness among the people to combat the heat wave conditions.

(c) and (d) The State Government have reported five confirmed cases of death due to sun-stroke; two in Dhenkanal district and one each in Angul, Mayurbhanj and Kalahandi districts.

Pest attack on cotton

4120. SARDAR BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDAR

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the loss that has been suffered due to destruction of cotton crops by several pests attack in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh during the last five years; and

(b) what steps have been taken to arrest this menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO : (a) The loss in production of cotton is attributable to various factors like unseasonal rains, floods, drought, besides other adverse weather conditions, non-availability of resistant/tolerant varieties, untimely sowing, lack of balanced use of fertilisers and recommended quality pesticides, non-adoption of recommended cultural practices, etc; and not to pests attack alone.

(b) The major steps taken to check the pests attack on cotton include monitoring and surveillance of cotton pests for early forewarning, conducting